

**CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH  
CALIFORNIA REENTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Friday, February 22, 2008  
9:00 A.M.**

**LOCATION:** Westin San Diego  
400 West Broadway  
San Diego, California

**Members of the Reentry Advisory Committee (RAC) in attendance:**

Chair James E. Tilton, Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)  
Vivian Auble, Department of Health Services  
Carolyn Briggs, Housing Director, Ventura County Behavioral Health Department  
Vaughn Jeffery, California State Association of Counties  
Shirley Melnicoe, Northern California Service League  
Jeff Wyly, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency  
Judith Harris, Regional Parole Administrator, Region I, Division of Adult Parole  
Reginald "Reggie" Wilkinson, President/CEO (retired), Ohio College Access Network, Education and Vocational Training Services Expert,

**CDCR Staff Present:**

Kathryn Jett, Undersecretary, Programs  
Kathy Prizmich, Deputy Chief, External Affairs  
Paula Gutierrez, Deputy Director, Asset Management, Facilities Planning, Construction and Management  
Cynthia Florez-DeLyon, County Liaison, Parole Administrator I, Office of Reentry Facilities  
Victoria Propp, Office Technician, Office of Reentry Facilities

**Also Present**

Michael Lawler, Center for Public Policy Research (CPPR), UC Davis

Lisa Whitaker, CPPR, UC Davis  
Gerald Johnson, Chaplain, Oceanside Police Department  
Jack Anderson, Sheriff (A), Orange County  
Anita Paredes, Executive Director, Community Connection Resource Center  
Bahia Wilson, Paladin Eastside Psychological Services, Inc.

**1. Call to Order and Welcome**

Chair Tilton opened the meeting at 9:18 a.m. He thanked San Diego County for hosting the day's events and for the County's modeling of what the RAC is trying to accomplish.

Mr. Lawler introduced the day's agenda.

**2. Update from October 2007 and Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion by Chair Tilton, seconded by Member Jeffery, the October 2007 Minutes were approved.

**3. RAC Feedback on SB 618 Tour**

Ms. Harris commented on the impressive interaction and partnership exhibited by San Diego County, as well as the passion the participants "brought to the table." Other members also stated their positive impressions regarding San Diego County's reentry efforts.

Mr. Wilkinson discussed the reality of collateral sanctions (i.e. housing restrictions) and the negative impact they have on paroling prisoners.

Ms. Melnicoe suggested that SB618 be reissued, as only San Diego County has responded thus far. She also hoped that in the future SB618 could be expanded to include high-risk offenders. Chair Tilton responded that CDCR definitely needs to look at high risk offenders as well -- in essence, any offender willing to re-program needs to be considered.

Chair Tilton stated that he requested additional reentry programming resources to expand to other counties but the request was denied.

However, he will find a way to take what has been learned in San Diego and offer similar resources to other interested counties.

Ms. Melnicoe noted that ex-offenders may become highly effective case managers. Chair Tilton stated that one of his most effective education programs is being run by an ex-offender.

Mr. Jeffery recommended using peer support (i.e. incarcerated offenders) titled as Case Aids or something similar, since these people have knowledge that others (non-offenders) do not. In addition, he has found that the skill set of the Social Worker class can be especially helpful in the reentry environment.

#### **4. Update on AB900 Rehabilitation Programs and Strike Team Report**

Ms. Jett provided a general update on the AB900 Programs, including the following:

A new Chief Deputy Secretary, Adult Programs, Carole A. Hood, has been appointed by the Governor.

CDCR is looking at three guides in architecture planning: the Expert Panel Report; the AB900 law that provides benchmarks; and the Governor's Strike Team.

Mechanisms are being developed for the reporting of their ongoing work. One integral group being reported to is CROB.

All needed reports and requirements have been received; now it is up to CDCR to move forward. Plans have been presented to the wardens and the 33 institutions have been ranked for their potential efficacy with reentry facility programs.

A plan has been developed on how to proceed within CDCR. Six core programs have been identified and they are moving towards implementation of these programs.

It has been clearly identified that working with offenders with a high risk to reoffend will be a key to success.

Using information gleaned from the recently completed risk assessment tool will be one key when approaching legislators on how best to proceed.

Chair Tilton discussed the need for forming a regional process where someone will be charged with ensuring consistency throughout the agencies in particular regions. How does CDCR provide a person clearly accountable within a region so others know who to talk to when wanting to get things done?

Ms. Jett then provided a review of the Strike Team Report:

The Team is looking at all inmates, not just high risk offenders. They are developing a system for tracking inmates to determine how best to facilitate reentry (in line with the SB618 concept).

The first chapter of the Report discusses an offender accountability and rehabilitation plan developed by the Strike Team.

The Report described the highest risk area as being in IT.

The Report addressed the daunting task of staff training, noting the large numbers of staff that will require additional training.

The Report delineated several evidence-based programs that could be used as blueprints.

Chair Tilton expressed a disagreement with the Strike Team Report recommendation on timeframes for training, stating that it is problematic to train so many staff so quickly. He also expressed his strong agreement that the training of staff is essential.

The Strike Team Report mentioned Project Rio (based in Texas), which capitalizes on existing services, vocational training and other

opportunities, as an exceptional program for reentry. The Team has named the California version of the program Project New Start.

The Report discusses many different parole strategies that are being developed and designed to promote uniformity across the system. In addition, it discusses developing incentives for parolees to earn their way off parole.

The Report reflects three key segments that need to work in tandem: a Department heading in the right direction; a Legislature that will be supportive in implementing evidence-based reforms; and a Governor's Office that is independent and passionate about these issues.

The Strike Team disbanded in December and members will continue to collaborate as the process as is implemented.

Chair Tilton stressed that finalizing the various needed elements has been done; now it's time to implement the programs and move forward.

Mr. Jeffery expressed his appreciation at the RAC's realization that there is no one "cookie cutter" approach to the problem; staying the course and adapting to what is effective on the local level is extremely important.

Chair Tilton noted the need for consistency in terms of risk and needs assessments and specific definitions of what those terms mean.

Mr. Jeffery asked how best to match the in-prison vocational programs with the local economy? For example, in San Diego there is a huge hospitality industry; in Imperial County, which is agricultural-based, there is a high need for diesel mechanics. Chair Tilton responded that if local communities are willing to design a program to fit their particular needs, he would be willing to pay for that program.

Mr. Wyly added that One Stop Centers are geared toward the local economy and can assist as well.

Ms. Jett commented that the RAC is looking at the various job markets on the local levels and beginning the process of more accurately incorporating local needs into the various reentry programs.

Mr. Wilkinson discussed the need to teach offenders good work skills -- safety, good communication skills, appropriate dress, appropriate work ethics, etc. -- and affirmed this as the most important element involved regardless of specific vocations.

## **5. Design Principles for Secure Reentry Facilities**

Ms. Gutierrez discussed the differences between the reentry facilities and the current prisons. Offenders will initially be housed in a cell environment, gradually moving into a dorm environment and then into an apartment environment which will allow them the independence of cooking for themselves and doing their own laundry while incorporating the anger management and life skills they require to "catch up" to the outside community environment.

The exterior of the building will not look like a prison but rather fit in to the surrounding community.

Chair Tilton commented on the heavy expense involved with the apartment environment concept and the difficulty in persuading the Legislature to accommodate the expenses involved. He stated that feedback from the communities and the RAC will be required to determine how best to spend their limited funding. Also, a work furlough concept needs to be discussed. Mr. Jeffery echoed the importance of the work furlough idea.

Chair Tilton discussed the importance of working with communities to determine what their role will be with the reentry facilities. Also, a small number of cells will be required for those offenders not able to transition properly into the facility environment.

Ms. Jett noted that the existing document is not yet the final prescription and more discussion will be forthcoming before facility designs are

finalized. Also, since there are different capacities from county to county, design concepts will retain some flexibility.

Ms. Harris reiterated the importance of the “façade” of the facility and how important the look of the outside appearance is for acceptance in the local community.

Mr. Wilkinson asked if the reentry facilities will be considered prisons. Chair Tilton responded that they will be called reentry facilities or something similar but not prisons.

Mr. Wilkinson also suggested that it be considered that employees dress differently than in regular prisons (perhaps something other than uniforms).

Mr. Jeffery expressed his appreciation for the flexibility in facility design, noting that the facilities will probably be in the community for decades and need to be designed for the long haul.

## **6. Status of Reentry Communications Outreach**

Ms. Florez-DeLyon and Ms. Prizmich presented an overview of Outreach activities. Some highlights:

Reentry workshops were held in 2007, in conjunction with local governments, and there was tremendous community response (over 800 participants). The workshops were designed to engage the communities, to test out the concept of reentry and to receive input to find out how to do a better job.

Webinars are ongoing with over 32 counties responding.

Some counties are supportive; some have a trust issue -- is CDCR going to be there for the long haul?

Local government needs to be at the table as a partner throughout the entire process.

CDCR is now meeting bi-weekly with their external statewide associations to discuss reentry and other issues within CDCR.

Various messengers (CDCR employees and others) are promoting the reentry facilities throughout communities. Informational and educational pamphlets have been created, as well as videos, media events and talk radios. Most importantly, the message needs to come from people on the local level, as they are the figures trusted locally.

Mr. Jeffery pointed out that every professional has a local organization or meeting that occurs annually or more often. At these meetings the concepts of reentry can be placed on the agenda and discussed.

Ms. Prizmich noted that this process has been initiated on the statewide level and will be expanded to include the local level as well.

Ms. Jett commented that, although CDCR is a huge organization within itself, outside CDCR most others don't know what CDCR does. The CDCR structure does not currently contain a community outreach component but this is now being added to CDCR structure. It is especially important that this outreach occur on the local level on an ongoing, permanent basis.

In addition, what is the most appropriate information to provide to the public? Input from an external committee on what is most resonant for the public is needed. Also, some feedback is needed from the local level-- what does CDCR do right and what needs to be improved? Why are particular things funded? Where are the service gaps that need to be filled? How should the critical standards be met by the service providers and purchasers? How can CDCR maximize what they are doing with the reentry facilities?

Ms. Harris commented that there are parolees all over the state, not just in the larger counties, and she will help to connect with the smaller, regional groups that also want to participate but don't know how to as yet.



Mr. Wilkinson stated that communities need to “own” this and they should take the leadership to make sure reentry facilities work -- not the Legislature, not the Governor’s Office. Helping local communities to help themselves is the right approach.

Ms. Melnicoe concurred that many of the local service providers would like to enter into the conversation. What is the actual goal of each of these projects? How can we make the programs more successful?

Ms. Jett indicated that we have been engaging community providers with a bi-weekly conference call with external stakeholders. CDCR has also been working with community providers in relationship with the planned Northern California Reentry Facility in Stockton.

## **7. Public Comment**

Chaplain Johnson stated that the issue of recidivism is a moral problem with a moral solution. He discussed the importance of empowering the Chaplains to use their connections within the community to develop effective programming for rehabilitation that helps offenders to make better moral choices.

Chair Tilton commented on the importance of the interfaith groups in helping to facilitate the connection between the reentry facilities and the outside community.

Assistant Sheriff Anderson reported on the activities in Orange County. They are currently rated at 129% of their jail capacity and thus in need of additional facilities. Orange County wants reentry facilities and is very willing to partner with the state in this endeavor. They have facilities currently that they can make available for reentry.

Chair Tilton stated his preference that CDCR operates the reentry facilities but they are open to other possibilities. CDCR wants to be as flexible as possible to properly represent the state’s interests, yet they also want to be able to support local interests as well, and are willing to work with the local communities to make this work. He welcomes the opportunity to sit down and work this out with Orange County.

Ms. Anita Paredes, Community Connection Resource Center, echoed Mr. Wilkinson's comment that the community has to "own" the reentry process. The Center has worked very hard to lay the groundwork for the implementation of SB618 and they are ready and willing to assist in any way to contribute in terms of educating the public and communities.

Ms. Bahia Wilson, Paladin Eastside, expressed her appreciation for the progressive thinking of the RAC. She asked that the RAC look at the possibility of running the reentry facilities privately.

## **8. Next Steps**

Chair Tilton discussed two issues. First, documents will be going out soon that will ask who is interested in doing reentry facilities separate from jail bond funding. When a community responds, CDCR will begin the process of sitting down and negotiating deals with them. Secondly, RAC is working with General Services to determine if there are developers in the community who would be willing to work with the state to construct facilities that would be utilized in the local community and leased by the state. Chair Tilton asked the RAC members to assist with this process as needed, especially in developing the partnership between the state and the local communities.

Mr. Jeffery commented that San Diego County would be pleased to help assist with the partnership process.

Ms. Jett inquired about moving the meeting location from time to time, perhaps in conjunction with visiting the local reentry facilities.

The next meeting will be in the May/June timeframe.

Ms. Jett stated that new appointees have been approved to augment the RAC. Those appointees will be joining the existing group at the next meeting.

## **9. Adjournment**

Chair Tilton thanked the participants for an exciting, invigorating meeting and expressed his strong belief that they are on the right track.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.